

ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ETTAP)

Announcement of Request for Applications

- AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
- ADDRESS:** 400 Seventh S.W. Room 9414
Washington, D.C. 20590
- CONTACT:** Patricia Martin at patricia.martin@ost.dot.gov
- ACTION:** Request for Applications for the Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Program
- ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS:** Minority Institutions (MIs) as defined in 34 CFR 637.4(b) as an accredited college or university whose enrollment of a single minority group or combination of groups exceeds 50 percent of the college's or university's total enrollment.
- SUMMARY:** Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) is responsible for the Department's implementation and execution of the functions and duties under Sections 8 and 15 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637), for developing policies and procedures consistent with the federal statutes to provide policy direction for small, businesses, women-owned businesses and disadvantaged business enterprises' (SB/WOB/DBEs) participation in the Department's procurement and federal financial assistance activities. The OSDBU is also responsible for implementing and monitoring the Department's goals for small, women-owned and disadvantaged businesses enterprises (SB/WOB/DBEs). The Secretary of Transportation has encouraged DOT operating administrations to expand opportunities for these entrepreneurs to participate fully in all DOT-funded

procurements and financially assisted programs. This request solicits competitive applications from Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) designated as Minority Institutions (MIs) for participation under OSDBU's Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Program (ETTAP). OSDBU will enter into Cooperative Agreements with IHEs designated as MIs to provide transportation-related training and technical assistance for small, women-owned, and disadvantaged businesses enterprises (SB/WOB/DBEs).

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION:

This RFA is being issued electronically at www.fedgrants.gov.

This RFA can be downloaded at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/ettap/rfa2004.pdf>

Explanation to Prospective Applicants – Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this RFA must request it by e-mail. The e-mail address for Patricia Martin is listed below. The applicant must submit this request within two weeks of receipt of the application to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications. Oral explanations or instructions given before award of a cooperative agreement will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants. **Note:** Mr. Sean M. Moss, OSDBU, Director will not accept any e-mails inquiries concerning this RFA; please direct all your e-mail inquiries to Pat Martin.

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**GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING FOR THE
ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ETTAP)**

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INTRODUCTION:

1.1 BACKGROUND:

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) established the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) in accordance with Public Law 95-507, an amendment to the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958. The OSDBU assists in administering the Department's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program which is designed to ensure that small businesses, including women-owned, disadvantaged and minority firms, have an equitable opportunity to participate in DOT's procurement and financial assistance programs and that they receive a fair share of the resulting contract awards. The DOT's policy is to encourage and increase small, women-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises (SB/WOB/DBEs) participation in contracts awarded and program funding.

The OSDBU established programs dedicated to fostering diversity in educational opportunities in the field of transportation. Particularly in keeping with OSDBU mandated mission, the programs focus on increasing SB/WOB/DBEs access to DOT financial assistance programs and contracting opportunities by providing transportation-related training and technical assistance.

1.2 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:

Over the years, OSDBU has worked in a cooperative effort with IHEs designated as MIs to implement programs that would utilize the educational skills of MIs to develop the financial and management skills of SB/WOB/DBEs and to promote the further participation of SB/WOB/DBEs in transportation-related contracts, and foster diversity in educational opportunities for college students in the field of transportation.

In addition, recognizing the importance of MIs to the minority community and the country at large, President Bush issued amended Executive Orders 12677, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), 12900, Educational Excellence for Hispanics (HSIs), and 12860, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), which directed each agency of the executive branch to develop closer relationships with MIs and to increase the participation of MIs in federally sponsored programs.

In March 2002, DOT's, Secretary Mineta issued the Strategic Plan for the Department of Transportation (DOT) and charged the OSDBU to take the policy lead for the Department and work cooperatively with each DOT mode to review business as it is now conducted in order to best use our resources to accomplish our objective--to promote greater opportunities for SB/WOB/DBEs. A careful review of OSDBU's mandate, mission, priorities, and goals, determined a need to revise the scope and activities with the MIs. The OSDBU has decided to restructure the ETTAP. This effort is designed to support and promote greater opportunities for SB/WOB/DBEs.

1.3 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:

The cooperative agreements awards are for a one-year period. Continued funding is contingent upon satisfactory performance and the availability of funds.

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF COMPETITION:

The intent of ETTAP is to enable the OSDBU to support its mandated mission by utilizing the resources of IHEs designated as MIs to increase access for SB/WOB /DBEs participation in transportation-related programs; and Assist SB/WOB/DBEs in securing information on DOT procurement opportunities through the provision of training, technical assistance, and financial assistance programs to increase the number of SB/WOB/DBEs that enter into transportation-related contracts. This effort will strengthen the transportation expertise at MIs and provide training for students in the transportation field and also provide experience for MIs which will help them to compete for opportunities at other Federal agencies

This request for application (RFA) is to solicit applications from eligible IHEs designated as MIs, as defined in 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, Section 361 (1) and (2). Under the statute the term Institution of higher education (IHEs) means educational institution in any State that: (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an education program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2 year program that is acceptable for full credit

toward such a degree; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted preaccreditation status, and the Secretary of the Department of Education has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Eligible Institutions:

For the purpose of this part, the term “eligible institutions means:

Minority Institutions (MIs) as defined in 34 CFR 637.4(b) as an accredited college or university whose enrollment of a single minority group or combination of groups exceeds 50 percent of the college’s or university’s total enrollment.

It is OSDBU's intent to fund four (4) IHEs designated as MIs. In addition, only one cooperative agreement will be awarded to a particular MIs; therefore, MIs with multiple campuses should coordinate and submit only one application per MIs. Further, in order to avoid duplication of effort, the goal is to award only one cooperative agreement per state.

The DOT OSDBU reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted under this RFA.

1.5 ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

The anticipated outcome of the program are: (1) Training and technical assistance workshops to ensure that the SB/WOB/DBEs participate in transportation related procurements and contracting opportunities; (2) Student internships/mentorship that will produce students capable of working in the transportation industry and who are interested in advance degrees in transportation; (3) Conference and seminar participation to ensure that the DOT’s programs are advertised in their geographical areas; (4) Development of Case Studies to highlight issues of interest to emerging SB/WOB/DBEs. Through the cases, SB/WOB/DBE’s will discuss and analyze issues that impact businesses and explore possible solutions to these issues and then develop an improvement plan to address these issues; (5) Financial Assistance training workshops, namely OSDBU’s Short-Term Lending Guarantee and Bonding Assistance Programs. OSDBU proposes to

design a program that is responsive to the changing needs of the small business community.

2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

In conducting the activities to achieve the goals of the ETTAP, each recipient shall be responsible for implementing the activities under 2.1 through 2.6. The OSDBU shall be responsible for conducting activities under 2.7.

RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Conduct Electronic Workshops to provide training and technical assistance on the use and access to Electronic Commerce and the Internet. Develop and conduct on-line training.
- b. Develop a Transportation-related Student Internship/ Mentorship Program.
- c. Participate and develop conferences and seminars with Federal, state, and local governments and the DOT Outreach Program such as Transportation Equity Act Model (TEAM), including surety Agents and banks, which support DOT Financial Assistance Programs.
- d. Development of Case Studies.
- e. Develop Financial Assistance Training Workshops.

2.1 Electronic Workshops: Conduct electronic workshops to provide training and technical assistance to SB/WOB/DBEs and students, so they can gain an understanding of transportation-related policies. Also, the workshops would assist SB/WOB/DBEs in conducting research on contract opportunities and transportation-related issues. This effort would broaden the participant's knowledge of the DOT and other Federal agencies programs, thereby increasing SB/WOB/DBEs' ability to bid on Transportation-related contracts.

To accomplish this task, the recipient will perform as a minimum, the following activities:

2.1.1 Implement workshops to train and assist SB/WOB/DBEs in accessing transportation-related contracts through hands on use of the Internet; example: E-commerce, Central contractor Registration Databases (CCR), Electronic Posting Systems, etc. MIs should learn how to do business with the DOT and other related transportation agencies before conducting these workshops.

2.1.2 Training should be designed to strengthen existing SB/WOB/DBEs capabilities enabling them to become more economically stable through increased participation in transportation-related contracting opportunities.

2.1.3 Conduct minimum of ten (10) business-related training workshops during the duration of the cooperative agreement.

2.1.4 Solicit SB/WOB/DBEs including Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBzone) types in the surrounding areas to participate in the training workshops.

2.1.5 Evaluation forms for each training workshop should be submitted to the ETTAP Program Manager with each quarterly report to the OSDBU. This information should contain data gathered from SB/WOB/DBEs on the effectiveness of the workshop and a detailed response on how it has or will increase the SB/WOB/DBE's ability to market Federal, state and local government agencies for transportation-related contracts. MIs shall include company's names and addresses, if they were awarded contracts as a result of the training and technical assistance provide by the MIs.

2.2 Student Internships: Design an internship program that includes students from a wide range of disciplines related to transportation. The internship program should be developed in conjunction with local and state transportation agencies and interested private sector participants. Student interns placed in federal, state, local government, and private sector transportation-related companies will receive a stipend from the agreement funds at an amount that is approved by both parties of the agreement. Stipends for internships will be paid directly to the student or the student can receive academic credit. Internships will be no less than ten weeks and may be full or part time.

The following information shall be submitted to the Program Manager for approval prior to development of the internships:

2.2.1 Students selected for the internship program shall be required to participate in the mentorship program.

2.2.2 Criteria used for selecting students to participate in the program.

2.2.3 Grade point average or evidence of outstanding ability.

2.2.4 Work experience.

2.2.5 Research skills.

2.2.6 Number of students participating in the internship program.

2.2.7 Amount of stipends to be paid to interns.

2.2.8 Term of the internships.

2.2.9 Names of agencies participating in the effort.

2.3 Student Mentorship Program: Develop a student mentorship program for the transportation industry in conjunction with the internship program. Mentees shall have completed ETTAP internship program. Students participating in the mentorship program shall be paid a stipend. Further, student mentee salaries should differ from those students participating in the internship program. The stipend should be paid directly to the student or the student can receive academic credit. Participating will be no less than 10 weeks and may be full or part-time.

2.3.1 Develop and conduct a one-day orientation prior to program initiation as well as bi-weekly meetings with mentees to monitor their progress.

2.3.2 Develop an individual development plan for each student mentee which shall include a transportation professional or business owner as their mentor. In addition, academic studies and training shall be merged for students majoring in transportation and related disciplines.

2.3.3 Each student mentee shall meet with at least three (3) SB/WOB/DBEs for the purpose of sharing the DOT/OSDBU Marketing Package and discussing the Financial Assistance Programs available. A report summarizing the student mentee meeting with the SB/WOB/DBEs shall be forwarded to OSDBU.

2.3.4 Mentee shall develop one (1) case study paper to be submitted to OSDBU as a teaching tool for SB/WOB/DBEs.

2.4 Conference Exchange: Develop partnerships with the OSDBU outreach partners, teams, sureties companies, banks, Federal, state and local governments and other MIs thereby enhancing and improving access to contracts, bonding and lending opportunities through conference partnerships as well as seminars.

To accomplish this task, the recipient shall perform as a minimum the following activities:

2.4.1 Develop seminars and conferences that would increase SB/WOB/DBEs' abilities to bid on transportation-related contracts.

2.4.2 Participate in one of OSDBU Marketplace conference throughout the nation when required. Assist in planning and implementing phases of OSDBU conferences, including logistical and data information development, invitees, geographical setting and media, as requested.

2.4.3 Develop a database that will produce a broad and diverse range of SB/WOB/DBEs that can benefit from DOT financial programs.

2.4.4 Participate in orientation training that is conducted by OSDBU on all of their programs.

2.5 Develop Case Studies: Develop Case Studies paper from information collected through observations and discussions with selected SB/WOB/DBEs. The cases shall include owner profile, business concept generation, roadblocks, planning and control, technical and other issues. The case studies emanating from these partnerships may provide input for research, conference papers, and educational materials.

To accomplish this task, the recipient shall perform as a minimum the following activities:

2.5.1 Develop Case Studies with at least three (3) SB/WOB/DBEs. Case Studies should provide information on the issues that affect SB/WOB/DBEs.

2.5.2 Case Studies should entail the process of exchange of information with appropriate companies, federal, state, local agencies and financial institutions from inception of the study to action use in preparation of the document to completion.

2.5.3 Project directors and mentees shall present these Case Study papers and provide a forum where participants can candidly discuss the program administration and exchange views on the most effective way to enhance the business development contracting opportunities both short and long-term at marketplace conferences.

2.6 Financial Services Training Workshop: Development of training technical assistance workshops for SB/WOB/DBEs to participate in OSDBU Financial Assistance Programs, namely the Short-term Loan Guarantee Program (STLP) and the Bonding Assistance Programs (BAP). Further, 8(a) firms, HUBzone and Disabled Veterans are eligible to participate in the financial assistance services.

To accomplish this task, the recipient shall perform as a minimum the following activities:

2.6.1 Develop training and technical assistance activities and strategies to maximize outreach regarding DOT procurement opportunities and the STLP and BAP.

2.6.2 Provide businesses access to bonding program information; obtain bid, performance and payment bonds for transportation related contract up to \$1,000,000. In addition, MIs will also provide businesses access to the loan program information to obtain guarantee lines of credit up to \$750,000 for accounts receivable financing.

2.6.3 Conduct “how-to-workshops” for package preparation and completion of application for the STLP and BAP.

2.6.4 Develop quality bond and loan applications to be presented to OSDBU program agents and banks to ensure that a minimum of 2 bonds and 2 loans are approved by sureties and lending institutions for SB/WOB/DBEs.

2.6.5 Develop follow-up procedures for SB/WOB/DBEs to track the progress of SB/WOB/DBEs whom are in the process of obtaining DOT and federally funded contracts.

2.7 OSDBU RESPONSIBILITIES:

The OSDBU shall perform the following roles as its contribution to the attainment of ETTAP objectives:

2.7.1 Provide consultation and technical assistance in planning, implementing and evaluating activities under this announcement.

2.7.2 Provide orientation and training to MIs awarded funding to participate in ETTAP.

2.7.3 Systematically monitor and oversee the ongoing operations to monitor effective and efficient use of federal funds.

2.7.4 OSDBU will review quarterly performance reports, including case study narrative. Incomplete, late, or missing reports may lead to termination of funding.

2.7.5 OSDBU will provide conference material, such as the procurement forecast, bonding and lending information.

2.7.6 OSDBU will conduct an annual site visit.

3. Reporting Requirements:

Each recipient will be required to submit the following information to OSDBU Program Manager:

3.1.1 Budget, including an Implementation plan.

3.1.2 Criteria for selecting interns and mentees.

3.1.3 Training technical assistance workshop outlines for OSDDBU approval.

3.1.4 The mechanism for arranging, administering, and conducting Case Studies and it is subject to approval by OSDDBU.

3.1.5 Methodology for conducting Financial Assistance Training Workshop.

3.1.6 Quarterly reports shall include evaluation workshops forms.

3.1.7 Final reports.

3.1.8 Invoices for reimbursement quarterly.

4. Submission of application:

Each applicant shall submit the following:

Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF-424); Budget Disclosure of Lobby Activities (SF LLL); Certification Regarding Lobbying (49 CFR Part 20-Appendix A); Certification Regarding Drug-free Workplace Requirements (49CFR Part 29 Appendix C). The forms should be signed by an authorized official who can legally represent the MIs. Forms are available on: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/forms.html

4.1.2 Budget by task and indicate the name, annual salary, and expected level of effort of each person charged to the agreement. Provide resumes showing work experience for all personnel. In addition, include a timetable listing tasks and milestones, although there is no cost share amount or in-kind contributions required if you have any please, include the breakdown of the financial contributions and of all organizations involved in implementing this cooperative agreement. MIs' are encouraged to give serious consideration to the amount they propose as a signal of the MIs commitment to the activities.

4.1.3 A copy of the MIs current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. If the MIs are not included in an indirect cost rate agreement negotiated with the U.S. Federal Government, specify the applicable fringe benefit rates for each category of employees, and explain the benefits included in the rate.

4.1.4 A detailed description of how the MIs meet each of the selection criteria in Section 6.

4.1.5 Brief background information on the MIs including documentation of any transportation-related programs, curriculum, and/or activities.

4.1.6 Applications shall be single-sided, double-spaced, and printed in times roman 12 font. One unbound copy of application with no more than 30 pages with original signature suitable for reproduction plus 6 copies must be submitted. All pages shall be numbered at the bottom of each. All documentations, attachments, or other information pertinent to the application must be included in a single submission and forward directly to the address listed below. However, unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete application are not desired. Applications will be considered complete in all respects as initially received by OSDBU.

4.1.7 OSDBU must receive applications by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) April 23, 2004 from the US Postal Services or other commercial delivery service to be considered timely. Proposals should be submitted to Patricia Martin, ETTAP Program Manager, U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization 400 7th Street, S.W., Room 9414, Washington, D.C. 20590. Facsimile or electronically mailed applications will not be considered for this RFA.

Note: Initial application received after the deadline will not be considered.

5. Funding Level:

The total funding available for the ETTAP for a one year period is \$400,000. The maximum amount awarded to any MIs will be \$100,000. The awards will be made in the form of cooperative agreements and will run for a one year period.

6. Selection Criteria:

NOTE: The OSDBU is seeking applications that maximize the funding level that flows directly to programs benefiting SB/WOB/DBEs, outreach activities, and student interns in lieu of staff funding. In keeping with the intent of this goal, OSDBU encourages MIs to reduce the amount of DOT funds that would be used for staff salaries. Overhead should not exceed 15%. To accomplish this, MIs may wish to consider using an intern(s) instead of

full or part-time staff to provide support to the ETTAP. In addition, MIs could consider contributing in-kind cost sharing for part of the salaries and fringe benefits. It should be noted that the proposed selection criterion specifies that, we will judge each application on how well the MIs meet the objective of using the funds directly for its program elements in lieu of funding staff.

The following criteria shall be use to select IHEs designated as MIs for this program:

Reviewers will use the following evaluation criteria to select applications. For the ease of reading for the reviewers, applicants are requested to follow the sequence of criteria provided below: (Note: the criteria contain weight factors. Applicants must address each factor in order to qualify for the maximum number of points for each criterion.)

6.1.1 The ability of the MIs to develop and implement training workshops. The MIs shall demonstrate the ability to structure and execute an effective transportation-related training workshop directed at ensuring SB/WOB/DBEs participation in contracting opportunities with Federal, state, local government and private transportation entities. In addition Institution shall demonstrate the ability to execute a rigorous financial assistance training workshop with the primary focus on the Short-term Loan Guarantee Program (STLP) and the Bonding Assistance Programs (BAP). The weight for the criteria will be five (5)

6.1.2 The emphasis that the MIs places on student internship/mentorship as part of the effort. One of the objectives of the ETTAP program is to expand the number of students interested in the transportation careers or in entrepreneurship. In that regard, MIs should demonstrate a commitment to obtaining this goal. The weight for this criterion will be five (5)

6.1.3 MIs should demonstrate the ability to collaborate with state, local, Federal agencies, private transportation firms, surety companies, minority banks, minority development centers, and small business development centers in implementing business programs. The weight for this criterion will be three (5)

6.1.4 The MIs' ability to develop case studies paper directed at small, women-owned disadvantaged business concerns. The MIs should

demonstrate the ability to outreach to SB/WOB/DBEs networks that produce a broad and diverse range of emerging firms that can participate and benefit from case study paper. This criterion will be used as a benchmark to determine institution experience and capabilities to conduct case studies. The weight for this criterion will be three (3).

6.1.5 The MIs' commitment to accomplish the tasks in the framework, funding limits and time constraints of the program. We ask that MIs to review the budget to make sure that their proposal has taken into consideration the importance of maximizing the amount of funds that flow directly to programs that benefit the outreach activities and internships. DOT will consider the extent to which the applicant's proposed management plan clearly delineates staff responsibilities and accountability for all work required; presents a work plan with a clear and feasible schedule for conducting all project tasks; presents a reasonable and adequate planned budget as reflected in the budget-by-tasks and supporting rationale and justification for the budget. The weight for these criteria will be three (2).

7. Other Information

Confidential Information: Clearly mark information considered to be confidential.

DUNS Number: Grant applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering Systems (DUNS) number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has determined that there is a need for improved statistical reporting of Federal grants and cooperative agreements. The use of the DUNS number government-wide will provide a means to identify entities receiving those awards and their business relationships. The identifier will be use for tracking purposes, and to validate address and point of contact information.

A DUNS number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal (Grants.Gov). The DUNS number will supplement other identifiers required by statute or regulation, such as tax identification numbers. Organization can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no cost, by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

8. List of Acronyms used in ETTAP RFA:

BAP:	Bonding Assistance Program
CCR:	Central Contractor Registration Databases
D&B	Dun and Bradstreet
DBE:	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
DOT:	Department of Transportation
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering Systems
ETTAP:	Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Program
HBCU:	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HEA:	Higher Education Act
HSI:	Hispanic Serving Institution
HUBzones:	Historically Underutilized Business Zones
IHE:	Institution of Higher Education
MI:	Minority Institutions
OSDBU:	Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
RFA:	Request for Applicant
STLP:	Short Term Lending Guarantee Program
SB/WOB/	Small Business, Women-owned business and
DBEs:	Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
TCU:	Tribal Colleges and Universities
TEAM:	Transportation Equity Act Model